United Nations A/54/573

General Assembly

Distr.: General
16 November 1999
English
Original: Spanish

Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 86

Effects of atomic radiation

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

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I. Introduction

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 17 September 1999, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" and to allocate it to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

2. The Fourth Committee considered the item at its 20th and 21st meetings, on 10 and 11 November 1999 (see A/C.4/54/SR.20 and 21).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation.[1]

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.4/54/L.20

4. At the 20th meeting, on 10 November, the representative of Sweden introduced the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation[1] and, on behalf of Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay, introduced a draft resolution

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 46* (A/54/46).

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entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" (A/C.4/54/L.20). Subsequently, Malaysia, Monaco and Mongolia joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

5. At its 21st meeting, on 11 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.4/54/L.20 without a vote (see para. 7).

6. After the adoption of the draft resolution, the representative of Israel made a statement in explanation of position (see A/C.4/54/SR.21).

III. Recommendation of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

7. The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Effects of atomic radiation

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 913 (X) of 3 December 1955, by which it established the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, and its subsequent resolutions on the subject, including resolution 53/44 of 3 December 1998, in which, *inter alia*, it requested the Scientific Committee to continue its work,

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation,[2]

Reaffirming the desirability of the Scientific Committee continuing its work,

Concerned about the potentially harmful effects on present and future generations resulting from the levels of radiation to which mankind and the environment are exposed,

Noting the views expressed by Member States at its fifty-fourth session with regard to the work of the Scientific Committee,

Conscious of the continuing need to examine and compile information about atomic and ionizing radiation and to analyse its effects on mankind and the environment,

1. *Commends* the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation for the valuable contribution it has been making in the course of the past forty-four years, since its inception, to wider knowledge and understanding of the levels, effects and risks of atomic radiation, and for fulfilling its original mandate with scientific authority and independence of judgement;

2. *Reaffirms* the decision to maintain the present functions and independent role of the Scientific Committee, including the present reporting arrangements;

3. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to continue its work, including its important activities to increase knowledge of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation from all sources;

[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 46* (A/54/46).

4. *Endorses* the intentions and plans of the Scientific Committee for its future activities of scientific review and assessment on behalf of the General Assembly, including publication of its next comprehensive report in 2000;

5. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to continue at its next session the review of the important problems in the field of radiation and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session;

6. *Requests* the United Nations Environment Programme to continue providing support for the effective conduct of the work of the Scientific Committee and for the dissemination of its findings to the General Assembly, the scientific community and the public;

7. *Expresses it appreciation* for the assistance rendered to the Scientific Committee by Member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and non-governmental organizations, and invites them to increase their cooperation in this field;

8. *Welcomes*, in this context, the readiness of Member States to provide the Scientific Committee with relevant information on the effects of atomic radiation in affected areas, and invites the Scientific Committee to analyse and give due consideration to such information, particularly in the light of its own findings;

9. *Invites* Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations concerned to provide further relevant data about doses, effects and risks from various sources of radiation, which would greatly help in the preparation of future reports of the Scientific Committee to the General Assembly.